Misuse of Internet leased lines

102. SHRIMATI S.G. INDIRA : Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government are aware that the Internet Service Providers are running illegal telephone exchanges that are eroding the income of legal service providers and causing loss in taxes to the Central exchequer;

(b) whether it is also a fact that some Internet Service Providers have been misusing internet leased lines;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps taken by Government against these Internet Service Providers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (DR. SHAKEEL AHMAD): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) and (d) There are in all 387 Internet Service Providers (ISP) in the country as on date and out of these, 15 ISPs have been found whose links have been either illegally used by their customers or by themselves. In case of 4 such ISPs, the license has been terminated where the ISP were themselves illegally using the links. The companies whose licenses have been terminated are Megna Corp, Sigma Online, Capital Online and Sivam Data Tech. In 7 other cases where the customers of the ISPs were using the links illegally, a penalty of Rs. 5.9 crores has been raised by the licensor. Out of these 7 ISPs, 6 have filed cases in the Telecom Disputes and Settlement Tribunal (TDSAT) against the penalties raised by the licensor and orders are awaited from TDSAT. One ISP has paid part of the penalty and asked for rest to be adjusted by the licensor.